

# SPIRITUAL OPTICKS:

OR  
A GLASSE

Discovering the weaknesse and im-  
perfection of a Christians know-  
ledge in this life.

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To the Reader.

Reader,

**H**ere present thee with a little mirrour, wherein thou mayest easily discern thine own imperfections, unlesse they stand in thy light; and if thou wilt but use to reflect upon thy self, and dwell at home, thou mayest easily find that thou hast little reason either to admire thy self, or contemn others. If thy knowledge puff thee up, thou hast so much the lesse. He was counted a wise man who said that he knew but one thing, and that was, that he knew nothing; though another durst not own so much; and a wiser man then both tells us, that he that is wise in his own eyes is of all fools the most incurable; and another, that if any man think that he knows any thing, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know. So that it seems to be agreed on by those who are best able to judge, that the first piece of wisdom is to be sensible of ignorance. Then I hope this Discourse may prove not unprofitable, truly nor unseasonable

## To the Reader.

neither in this confident age, when every ignorant one is so prone to lean unto his own understanding, that he thinks himself too good to be taught, whereas indeed he hath not yet wit enough to learn. But it is the Devils subtilty to dazzle them with new light (as boyes do geese) that they may wink conceitedly while he pulls them naked, and makes them become ridiculous. It is sad to think how he puts out mens eyes, and then makes himself cruel sport with them; & the game of it is, that still they think themselves seers, and know not that they are blind, and naked, and miserable. Now if this glasse prove but instrumentall to reflect so much old light upon them, as to discover to them their own blindnesse, there will be some hope of cure. But Reader, I must intreat thee neither to condemn this piece because it is imperfect, nor yet contemn it for being little. It is imperfect, I confesse: but so is all our knowledge here, which is the subject of it; and if we know but in part, no wonder if we prophecy also but in part; besides, if Saint Paul himself could not utter the words which he had heard, then truly we may very well excuse this Authour for not expressing that in words, which neither ear hath heard, nor eye seen, nor the heart of man conceived. But it  
may



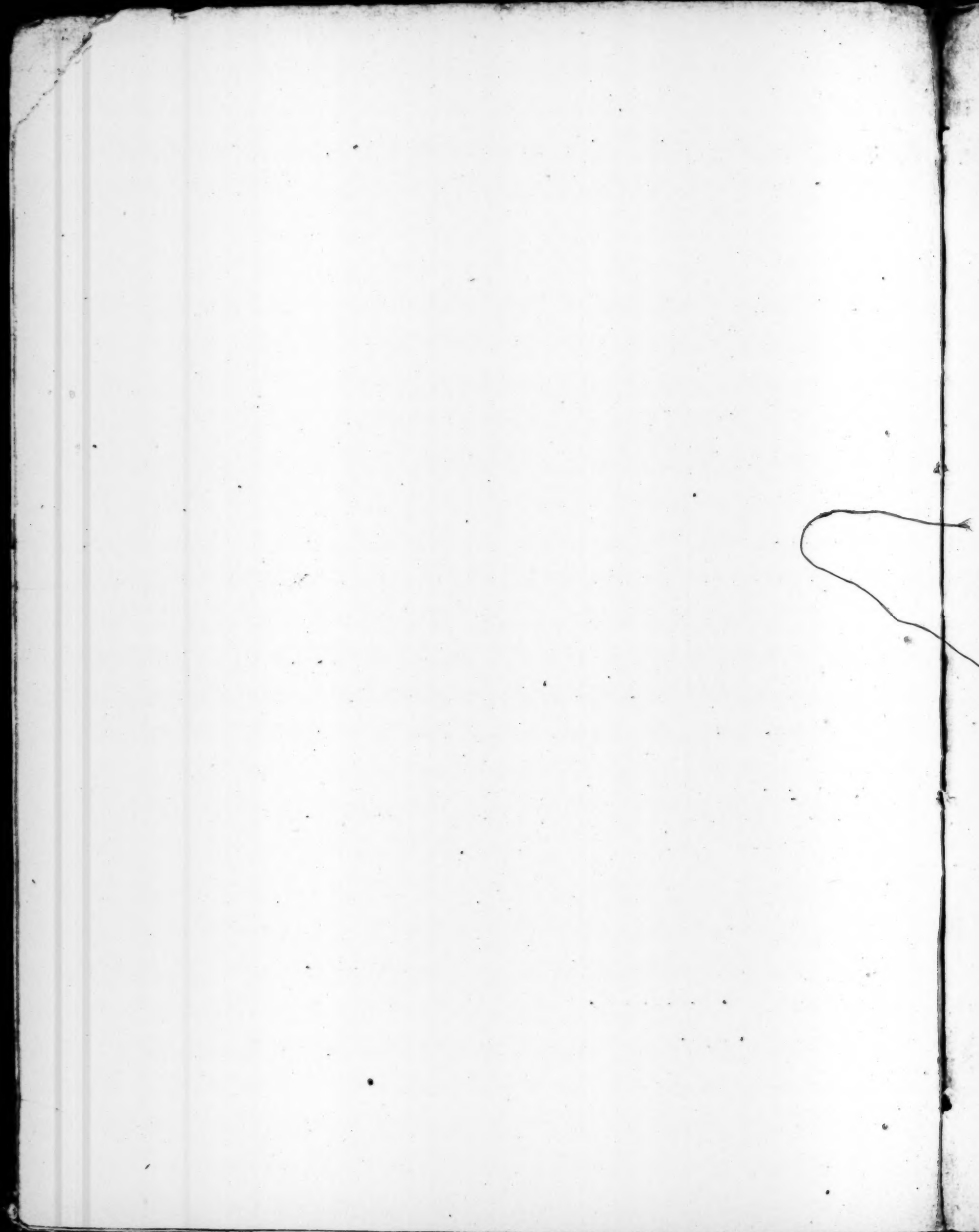
To the Reader.

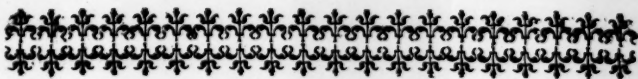
may be what is here said, may at first seem but little: it may be the sooner read: do but peruse it, and if it please thee, it is enough; if otherwise, too much. But indeed it was intended onely for a taste, and to bear the mace into the world before that learned and elegant treatise, which this ingenious Authour hath left behind him concerning The light of Nature; which now waits onely to see what entertainment this will meet withall. Perhaps it may be expected that I should adde something in praise of the Authour: but I am not ignorant that a freinds testimony is prone to be suspected of partiality; and although such an one have most reason to know the truth, yet Cassandra-like he seldome hath the hap to be believed. The best on 't is, he needs it not, his works will commend him most effectually: which if I shall indeavour to bring into publick view, I hope thou wilt find them such, that I shall not be thought either to have abused thy leisure, or to have wronged the memory of my deceased friend.

W. D.

Emman. Dec. 24.

1651.





# I. C O R. 13. 12.

*For now we see through a glasse darkly;  
but then face to face: now I know in  
part, but then shall I know even as also  
I am known.*

**A**U L that was of a piercing eie, and had as  
cleare an insight into the mysteries of salvation,  
as any other; whose soul was alwayes mount-  
ing towards that third heaven, whither he had  
once been rapt, and had there heard words that neither  
could nor might be uttered ( for so much is implied in  
*εἰς τὴν τρίτην οὐρανὴν* ) we find him here granting the imperfection  
of his knowledge, those weak and shadowy apprehensi-  
ons which he had of the Divine Majestie, while he *saw*  
*through a glasse darkly*; and encouraging himself with the  
consideration of the full and cleare vision, which we shall  
have of him hereafter, when *we shall see God face to face* in  
glory. Without any further preamble wee'l open the  
words of the text, that we may see this glasse clearly, and  
not *ἐν αἰνίγματι*.

Our Apostle here advances charity to the highest  
pitch of commendation, as a triumphant grace, a grace  
that had eternity stampt upon it. It out-lives faith, for that  
gives place to vision; it out-lasts hope, for that is swal-  
lowed up in fruition: Prophecies they shall vanish, and

tongues shall be silenced, and knowledge shall passe away: for 'tis weak and imperfect here, in its minority, yea, in its infancy; *When I was a child I spake as a child.* 'Tis cloudie and obscure here; *for now we see through a glasse darkly.*

*NOW we see &c.* Now that the Gospel beams out upon us with a powerfull and glorious ray. It was likely that at the first peeping out of heavenly light, at the Evangelicall day-break, before the shadows were fully scattered, that then there would be some obscuritie: I but 't has shin'd out brighter and brighter till perfect day, and yet still we see thus darkly.

Secondly, (which is the true and genuine meaning) *Now* whilst we are in this house of our earthly tabernacle, whilst the understanding of a man, which the wise man calls *The candle of the Lord*, while 'tis hid in the dark lantern of the bodie. Till this partition-wall be beaten down, we cannot *see God face to face*. There's no reaching of perfection here, 'tis treasur'd up for a better life. He that will shoot high may aim at a starre, but he must not think to hit it. *Nihil est ab omni parte beatum. Beatum & perfectum* are both one. Alas! *now* when the soul do's but *πτερυγίζει*, try the wing, and flutter towards heaven, 'tis presently pull'd down with an earthy bodie we carry about with us; 'tis so deprest here, as it can hardly look up to heaven: how then shall it *see God face to face*?

*Now WE see through a glasse &c.* Wee that have an holy *αἰσιν* that teaches us all things; we that have many secret *ἡσυχασμοί*, the whisperings and breathings of the holy Spirit, that *leads us into all truth*; we that are acquainted with the mind of God, that have had many a gracious aspect from him, yet *WE see but darkly*. No wonder that the

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the sunne's too bright for owls, when eagles are dazled with it, and become dimme-sighted; tis like that such as are aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel will be wholly ignorant of these *Magnalia*, when they that are à *secretioribus* know them but in part: if בני שחר *the sonnes of the morning*, the ὑπο φως, *children of light*; if these see so darkly, then surely a child of darknesse will see nothing at all: If Paul now a glorious Apostle see no more, what could he see when he was a furious persecutour, before the scales fell from his eyes?

Secondly, *We* that are no novices in Christianitie, but have made much progresse in the wayes of religion, yet we see but darkly. 'T was likely at the first opening of the soules eie, at the first cast of it upon heavenly things, that then 't would not see so clearly. I but it hath been long fixt upon God, eying of his goodnesse, gazing upon the riches of his free grace, viewing all his wayes, looking at and prying into his severall dealings; and yet still it sees thus darkly. And if a tall and eminent Christian see so little, what shall a babe see, a new born babe? If a vigorous and sparkling eie see no clearer, what shall a weak distempered eie, a blear-eyed soul, what shall that see? If an experienc'd Apostle, a Paul see no more, what shall a new disciple see, a Nicodemus that comes by night? he must needs see but darkly.

Now we see *through a glasse*, δι' ὀπίσσω. Some that would be more criticall then they need, would fain shew us a difference between ὀπίσσω and κατόπισθεν. Κατόπισθεν indeed with them is a looking-glasse: but ὀπίσσω is some other glasse: either such an one as is for the help of weak and aged eyes, and then 'tis, *we see through spectacles*; or else such as presents the object though a farre off, and so

'tis, *we see through a perspective*. The Vulgar Latine, that will have it *per transfennam, through a lattice*: as the Spouse in the Canticles is said to *flourish through the lattices*. And all these urge the force of the Preposition, δι' ἑστῆς, we see *through a glasse*, or *through a lattice*. But they might easily know, if they pleased, that δι' ἑστῆς here, is the same with ἐν ἑστῇ : and though it be true that ὁρατῆς is the more usuall word for a looking-glasse; yet 'tis as true that ἑστῆς signifies the same. Hesychius makes them *synonyma*: and the word is but once more used in the New Testament, 1. *James* 23. and there can be no doubt but there 'tis taken for a looking-glasse. Well then, our dark imperfect knowledge of God here is thus set forth by *seeing in a glasse*;

1. Because 'tis no immediate vision: the object is not primarily and immediately presented to the eie, but by way of resultancie, and *mediante speculo*, by the conveyance of the looking-glasse, which is a silent interpreter of the object. And such is our knowledge of God here, and such our communion with him; onely some broken beams of glory, some glimpses of his presence scattered here and there, in this ordinance, and in that, glasses of his own making, means of his proper institution.

2. 'Tis a weak and imperfect vision: for, First, according to some, not *res ipsa* but *imago rei*, onely the shape and resemblancce of the thing is seen; the effigies of the object drawn with the pencill of a beam is presented to the eie. And Secondly, as the Opticks tell us, *radius reflexus languet*, the beam begins to be weary, and is readie to faint, it gives a weak and languishing representation, 'tis an imperfect vision. And O how dark is our knowledge of God here! what poore manifestations have we  
of.

of his presence, in comparifon of that fight which we look for hereafter ! when his effence fhall be difplay'd with a moft glorious Emphafis.

3. Seeing through a glaffe is a vanifhing and tranfient vifion, as S. James expreffes it ; *A man having feen his naturall face in a glaffe , goes his way, and prefently forgets what manner of man he was.* A dying fpecies could not make any ftrong impreffion. One direct view of an object is more full and fatisfactorie, then the often feeing it through a glaffe.

Our Apostle hath applied it to our purpofe ; *Knowledge paffes away* , in refpect of that weak and imperfect way of knowledge which we have here ; for thus S. Paul gloffes upon his own text ; *When that which is perfect is come, then that which is imperfect fhall be abolifht.*

But befides all this, Beza and fome others think that our Apostle hath allufion to that way of knowledge which the Philofophers fhew us, and fo often fpeak of; That the underftanding doth ἐσπρίζειν τὰ νοήματα, *intellectus fpeculatur phantasmata*, and thus fees δι' ἐσπρίου αἰνιγματ. No light fprings into the mind but through the window of fenfe: the fenfe, that's the firft receptacle of the fpecies, which flowing from a materiall object fomewhat thick and muddy, they muft be clarified and thoroughly refined by the *Intellectus agens* , ( for that they fuppofe ) poured out from vefsel to vefsel, and taken off from the lees before the foul drink them in as her proper *nectar*. This remote and far-fetcht way of knowledge Saint Paul oppofes to the quick and prefent view which we fhall have of things ἐν ῥήϊ ὁφθαλμοῦ, when we behold them *in speculo divino* ; we fhall fee in that glaffe clearly. But there is a place in 2. Cor. 3.

18. where Saint Paul seemeth to oppose his own expression; for there to see through a glasse may seem to import a cleare and open vision; Heare what the words say, *We all with open face beholding as in a glasse the glory of God are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of our God.*

A learned Critick hath well observed that the Hebr. **פָּנֵינוּ** includes both, for it signifies both *vultus* and *speculum*. So that to see **פָּנֵינוּ** may either be to see *δι' ἐσώπριον ἐν ἀνίματι*, or else, *διὰ εἶδος ὡς ἀντίστυον πρὸς ἀντίστυον*. I know such as I formerly mentioned would have recourse to their difference of *ἐσώπριον* & *ἀντίστυον*, but if we look more accurately into the words, I think we shall find that even there to see through a glasse implies a dark and imperfect vision. For the Apostle compares those present advantages which we in the Gospel have over them which were under the Law: they were all under a cloud, and Moses had a vail upon his face; but we *ἀνακαλυμμένῳ προσώπῳ* with open face behold the glory of God: and yet it is but beholding it through a glasse; for thus the state of the Church under the Gospel is described, Rev. 4. there's a throne compassed with a sea of glasse, *θάλασσαν ὑάλινην*, verse 6. Under the Law it was *mare areum*, but now in the Gospel *mare vitreum*, clearer representations, as that renowned interpreter of the Revelation observes. Well then, in reference to them under the Law we behold with open face, but yet in respect to that cleare sight which we shall have hereafter, it is but *κατοπτρίζομενοι τὴν δόξαν Κυρίου* and so it follows, *we are changed into the same image from glory to glory: which though it may be thus understood, from his glory we become glorious; yet I doubt not but it is meant of the* severall



severall degrees of glory: and thus *τὸ δόξας εἰς δόξαν* is from grace to glory. For grace is *Aurora gloria*, the dawning of the beatificall vision. Grace is glory in the bud, and glory is grace at the full. Surely glory is nothing else but a bright constellation of graces, happinesse nothing but the quintessence of holinesse. And yet if any shall much contend, that there *to see through a glasse* expresses a cleare and unobscure vision, it is nothing prejudiciall to our present purpose: for here Saint Paul doubles his expression, *δι' ὁρατρίου ἐν αἰνίγματι*, we see through a glasse darkly in a riddle, *ἐν αἰνίγματι*.

*Enigma* is properly *obscura allegoria*, an allegory with a mask on: it is a borrowed speech and a cloudy speech. A knotty intricate speech sealed up and lockt from vulgar apprehensions, that's a riddle: and our knowledge of God here is thus cloudy and enigmaticall, and that if you take it in those three severall wayes which are usually given of it.

First, by way of removall or negation, when we take away all such things as are inconsistent with a Deity. And thus the Scripture riddles him forth, *With him is no beginning of dayes, nor end of life. He is not a man that he should lie, or the sonne of man that he should repent. With him is no variableness nor shadow of turning*, &c. and in this sense Dionysius tells us that *δι' ἀγνοίας γινώσκεται* and he there admires *τῶ ὑπερίστον θεῷ σκότος αἰνῶν*, the transcendent beams of Divine darknesse, for so that Areopagite is pleased to speak. Now you will easily grant that this is a dark and cloudy knowledge, when we cannot tell you what a thing is, but what it is not: for *ex puris negativis nihil concluditur*.

Secondly, when we conceive of him in a superlative way,

way, in a way of eminency and transcendency: and thus the forenamed authour (if he be the authour) speaking of his being, saith that 't is *in the way of eminency*. Many divine perfections are scattered and broken amongst the creatures, as the same face may be represented in severall glasses; and all the excellencies of the creatures are collected and meet eminently in God, as severall faces may be seen in one glasse. The creatures must be winnowed from all imperfections, and the finest and choicest of them must be taken to give some weak resemblance of a Deity: the ruddinesse of the rose, and the purity of the lily, nay the top and excellencie of the creation must be brought to shadow out the Spouses beauty; and yet that this knowledge is weak and imperfect will easily appeare.

1. Because these inferiour beings are so grosse and materiall, as that the purest of them, the very quintessence and *flos creaturæ* is meer dregs, if compared with so pure an essence; its gold becomes drosse, its silver tinne. And when heavenly perfections are set out by the creatures excellencies, it is but a stooping low to humane capacity: the soul would be dazeled at so bright a Majesty, unlesse he were clouded with such expressions.

2. This way of beholding him breeds rather admiration then begets knowledge; for when we heare of so goodly an essence that hath all excellencies bound up in one vast volume, we wonder what that should be: and admiration is at the best but *semen scientiæ* or *abrupta scientiæ*, as the learned Verulam calls it, a *stupified kind of knowledge*.

3. This rather sets the soul a longing then gives it any true satisfaction. For when we heare there is so choice a thing, we long to know what it is: which was a signe we knew it not before, or but very weakly. For true

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true knowledge fatiates the soul, there is a complacency and acquiescence in it, especially when it is conversant about so high an object: so that this way is but dark and full of riddles.

Thirdly, When we consider of God by way of Causality, in that vast influence which he hath upon all things, as with him is *αὐτὸς πηγαία καὶ ὑπερβλύουσα φωτοχυσία* (as the supposed Areopagite) *Springing beams of goodnesse, and overflowing effusions of light*, as he is *causa fontana*, a fountain essence continually bubbling forth, from whence the severall drops of inferiour beings have their originall: and as he is the main spring that sets the wheels of those petty entities on working: for *in him we live, move, and have our being*. Now this rather shews us that there is a God, then what he is; that there is indeed such a prime being, a self-being, an all-being, a giver of being, *a quo omnia, per quem omnia, propter quem omnia*; but still we are to seek, what this being is; so that these apprehensions of him are very weak and shadowie, *ὡς ὁπότεν ἐν ἀνύμνῳ*, *we now see through a glasse darkly*.

*But then* ] *Then* when a believing soul returns to God that gave it, it sees him face to face, and fixes its eye upon him to all eternity. As soon as ever the soul is unsheath'd from the bodie, it glisters most gloriously; as soon as ever it is unclouded from corruption, it shall beam forth most oriently; as soon as it is let loose from this cage of clay, it sings most melodiously: nothing hinders a Christian from a sight of God face to face, but the interposition of a grosse earthy body; it is deaths office to break down this wall of separation, that the soul may be admitted into the presence of God.

Secondly, *Then*, at that generall day of refreshment,  
C
when

when God shall sit upon his throne in beauty and excellencie as a centre of light streaming forth to the glorious circumference of the foure and twenty Elders, that sit *καθήμεν τῷ θρόνῳ*, as it is in the 4 of the Revelation.

*Face to face* ] *Πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον*. This is opposed to *seeing in a glasse*, 1. as a more immediate vision: 2. a cleare and perfect vision: 3. as a permanent and eternall vision: 4. as the learned Piscator, (because those things which we see in a glasse are *à tergo*) *except à facie & corpore proprio*.

In the words there is a plain allusion to that place in the 12 of Numbers the 8, where God promises to manifest himself to his servant Moses, *וְאֵל מֹשֶׁה וְאֵל בְּחִירָתוֹ* *וְאֵל מֹשֶׁה וְאֵל בְּחִירָתוֹ* *וְאֵל מֹשֶׁה וְאֵל בְּחִירָתוֹ*, as the Septuagint render it very agreeable to our purpose, & that which is here *וְאֵל מֹשֶׁה וְאֵל בְּחִירָתוֹ* & *וְאֵל מֹשֶׁה וְאֵל בְּחִירָתוֹ* is in other places *וְאֵל מֹשֶׁה וְאֵל בְּחִירָתוֹ* and in Esay *וְאֵל מֹשֶׁה וְאֵל בְּחִירָתוֹ* and is translated by S. John *ὁμοῦ πρὸς ὁμοῦ*, by our Apostle elsewhere *ὁμοῦ πρὸς ὁμοῦ*, and here *ὁμοῦ πρὸς ὁμοῦ*.

And yet we must not think that by vertue of this promise Moses had so full and beatificall a vision of God, as we expect hereafter in glory. No, it is spoken onely of Gods communicating himself to him in a clearer way then he would to any of the Prophets: he would speak to them in riddles, to Jeremie in the riddle of an almond tree, of a seething pot, and so to the rest of the Prophets; I but he conversed familiarly with Moses, as a man talks to his friend face to face. And as for Moses his petition in the 33 of Exod. 18. *I beseech thee show me thy glory*, it was onely a desire that God would shew himself in some corporeall resemblance, so as to assure him of his presence, that that would accompanie him. And this

is Gods answer, *I will make all my goodnesse passe before thee.* Besides, there is a plain deniall; God tells him he cannot see his face: Moses saw no more of God then we do here, the back-parts of his glory, he saw them in a corporeal resemblance, and we in an intellectuall vision. You see the allusion this place hath to that in Numbers.

Now as for the meaning of the words, *but then face to face.*

1. It is not meant of seeing Christ in his humane nature face to face, as Job speaks, *With these very eies I shall see my Redeemer:* for thus the wicked also shall see him with terrour and amazement, when the mountains shall be esteemed an easier burthen, if they could but cover them from the face of an angry Saviour that will frown them into hell,

2. As for the errour of the Anthropomorphites, it is so grosse as it neither deserves to be repeated, nor needs to be confuted.

3. I take it be meant of an Intellectuall beholding the very essence of God, according to that, 1. *John* 3. 2. *When he shall appeare we shall be like unto him, and see him as he is,* ~~now as he is~~ and yet it can by no means be a comprehensive vision: for that's a mere repugnancy, that a finite creature should grasp an infinite essence. Or by *the face of God* may be meant his glory and perfections; for the face is the throne of beauty.

In the following words S. Paul gives a plainer expression of that which before he had spoke more darkly.

*Now I see through a glasse darkly, now I know in part, but then face to face, now I shall know even as also I am known.* As when two see one another face to face, the one knows the other by sight, as he is known by him.

*Now I know in part* ] S. Paul on set purpose changes the person, that he may acknowledge his. own imperfection. He had included himself before, *Now WE see through a glasse darkly*. I, but he will do it more apparently, *now I know in part*: and when so great an Apostle inculcates his own defects, me thinks none should boast of their self-sufficiencie.

2. *Now I KNOW in part* ] Here is a reason of our imperfection here: *If the light that is in thee be darknesse, how great is that darknesse?* Knowledge is a leading principle, and all graces follow it in a just measure and proportion: if we knew God more, we should obey him more; if we knew more of his goodnesse, we should love him more; if we knew more of his Majestie, we should fear him more; if more of his faithfulnessse, we should trust him more: nay, if we knew him perfectly, all these would be perfect: when knowledge is compleat, obedience will be exact.

3. *Now I know IN PART*: according to the Syriack, *parum de multo*. 1. little of that I should know. 2. little of that I might know. 3. little of that others know. 4. little of that I desire to know. 5. little of that I shall know hereafter in glory.

4. *Now I KNOW in part*. 1. Religion is no fanisie, opinion, or conjecturall thing: no, we have a certain knowledge of God and his wayes here; we see through a glasse, though it be but darkly: there is truth in a riddle, though it be obscure. 2. A Christian begins his acquaintance with God here: he that knows him not *in part here*, shall never see him *face to face in glory*. We have here the first glimpses of heaven, a prospect of Canaan, the *πρωτη* *ἰσχυρα* of happinesse, the initials of Glory.

But then I shall know, *Τότε δὲ ἐμπνέσωμαι* ] *ἐμπνέσω* & *γνώσις* differ. *ἐμπνέσω* is ἡ ἐν τῷ ὁρατῷ γινώσκω τοῦ ἀγμά-  
τος παύσεως καὶ δυνάμει κατανόσις. It is bringing me better acquainted with a thing that I knew before, a more exact viewing of an object that I saw before afarre off. That little portion of knowledge which we had here shall be much improved, our eye shall be raised to see the same things more strongly and clearely. Our knowledge here was but *scintilla futura lucis*. When the soul shall say as the Queen of Sheba did to Solomon in the 1. Kings 10. *It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thine acts and of thy wisdom; howbeit I scarce believed the words untill I came, and mine eyes had seen it, and behold the half was not told me. Happy are thy men, O happy art these thy servants that stand continually before thee!*

Even as also I am known. *καθὼς καὶ ἐμπνέσω*. The words if they be put to it will endure a double Hebraisme. I shall know as I am known.

1. I shall know as I am approved, *sicut & agnitus sum*; nay Chrysostome makes *καθὼς* Causall; I shall know because I am approved.

2. I shall know as I am made to know. *καθὼς καὶ ἐμπνέσω*, that is, *καθὼς καὶ ἐκδηλωθῶ*, saith Beza; and (which is a wonder) Heinsius agrees with him. *καθὼς καὶ ἐγνώσθω* saith he; and indeed *γνώσθω* is the same with the Hebrew *יָדָע* and he tells us if we would render the words Hellenistically, they would run thus, *ἐμπνέσωμαι καθὼς ἐμπνέσει μοι ὁ θεός* I shall so know as God is pleased to be known by me, to manifest himself unto me. And yet Piscator rejects both these senses; the words themselves being sufficiently tempered with the particle *καθὼς*, which is not a note of equality, but of similitude, as in many other places.







former verse, and the  $\tau\acute{o} \alpha\acute{\omicron}\rho\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha} \theta\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}$  in the beginning of this verse, the eternal power and Godhead have manifested themselves, and the Prime cause hath been very apparent in those effects of his, which are here styled  $\pi\omicron\iota\eta\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\alpha \theta\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}$ , and could not possibly be produced by any inferior being. And as for that which we render *is clearly seen*, in the Originall it is no more then  $\kappa\alpha\tau\omicron\rho\epsilon\acute{\iota}\tau\omega$ . I know not how it comes to denote so cleare a vision; sure it may well consist with  $\epsilon\upsilon \alpha\iota\nu\acute{\iota}\gamma\mu\alpha\tau\iota$ , and yet withall they are so clearely seen  $\epsilon\iota\varsigma \tau\omicron \epsilon\upsilon\mu \alpha\nu\alpha\tau\omicron\lambda\omicron\gamma\acute{\eta}\tau\iota\varsigma$ , which though some would have the same with  $\omega\sigma\tau\epsilon \epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha\iota \alpha\nu\alpha\tau\omicron\lambda\omicron\gamma\acute{\eta}\tau\iota\varsigma$ , yet here I shall easily yield to the learned interpreter, and grant that it includes somewhat more.

This vast volume of the creatures set out by God himself without any *errata* in it, was printed in so fair a character, as he that ran might read it: and the least letter in it made shew of a most Divine impression. But alas! sinne, besides weakening of the soules eye, hath soyled and defaced the book; and hence we come to see in it so darkly. And yet still the letters are visible, and carry with them the print of a Deity. The world is, as one calls it, *Enigma Dei*. And it is full of looking-glasses: for God hath communicated severall resemblances of himself to the creature, as the face sheds that image or species upon the glasse whereby it self is represented. I need not speak of the blessed Angels, those pure and crySTALL mirrors, what glorious representations they give of their Creatour: look but into your selves, and you will find immortall souls shewing forth that image according to which they were made: or if you will look up to that vast and polished looking-glasse, you will see *The heavens declaring the glory of God, and the firmament shewing his*  
handy

*handy work.* Or cast but an eye upon the poorest and most abject being, and even there you will find some faint resemblances of a Deity. For as in the most glorious creature, as a creature, there is *aliquid nihili*, so in the most contemptible creature, as a creature, there is *aliquid Dei*. I, but the Atheist he shuts his eyes, & *quid caco cum speculo?* what should a blind man do with a looking-glasse? And yet sometimes there are lightening flashes of terror darted into him, and he begins with the Devils to *believe and tremble*. The Papists, as if there were not glasses enough of Gods making, they must have images of their own to put them in mind of God; their painted glasses: but surely they see through these very darkly. The Heathens they shall be judged for not ordering their lives and dressing themselves according to this glasse; for resisting those reliques of primitive light that shined out so strongly upon them. Well, here are glasses, but we see in them very darkly, and that by reason of a double defect.

1. *Ex parte speculi.*

Tis true, some of Gods attributes here clearly shew themselves: his power and sovereigntie, I, and his wisdom, and goodnesse too; but those sweetest manifestations of his love, the treasures of free grace and infinite mercy, the whole plot of the Gospel, not the least shadow of these to be found. Now for this very cause, the Gentiles in 2. Eph. 12. are called *ἀθεοί*, because they were without the knowledge of God in Christ. You know they had a goodly company of gods, an whole troop of deities: I, but they were without God in Christ, and hence they are styled *ἀθεοί ἐν κόσμῳ*, *without God in the world.*

2. *Ex parte oculi.*

1. Adam in innocencie had a glorious soul full of light, bright and sparkling eyes, *πνεὺς λαμπρὸς ὡς ἡ ἡμέρα*. He could read the smallest print, the least jot and tittle in the book of nature. See how quickly he tumbles o're the vast volume, and in a name gives a brief glosse upon every creature, a concise epitome of their naturall histories. He had a fair portion of knowledge, if he could have been contented with it. I, but he would fain have more, he must needs be tasting of the tree of knowledge: and hence springs our ignorance; we have ever since had an unhappy *ἁμαρτία*, the soul hath been darkened and dim-sighted. Perhaps it can see some goodly capitall letters, some fair flourish character: I, but there are multitudes of beings in a smaller print that it takes no notice of.

2. The soul might see more, if it would imploy it self more, and look ofner into this glasse of the creatures. Meditation would raise the creature higher, and distill sweetnesse out of every object. Tis *ἡ ἐξέλιξις τοῦ πολυπλοκῆς κόσμου*, as the elegant Moralist. The soul is busie with every thing it sees, as busie as a Bee: it goes from flower to flower, and extracts most precious sweetnesse.

3. Some eyes have been dazled too much with the glitterings of the creatures, so as to take the servant for the Master: and have been so much in admiring the glasse, as they forgot the glorious beauty that it represented. What worship and adoration hath the sunne had? even almost as much as the great Creatour of heaven and earth himself: strange that they should see so darkly, as not to discern the face from the vail that covers it. For the sunne is at best but *umbra Dei*, and *nubecula citò transi- turā*, a mere spot, a cloud, if compared with so bright an essence:

essence: and as he saith notably, The sunnes worshippers must needs be *ἄθεοι καὶ νυκτός*, *Atheists in the night time*. You have seen the glasse of the *Creatures*, and how in it we see very darkly.

Secondly, in *learnings* glasse, in *speculo scientiarum*. Learning brightens the intellectuall eie, and clarifies the soul: the Hebrews wise men are *עֵינֵי אֲפֵרַת* *aperti*, men with eyes open: and it sets a man on higher ground, and gives him a fairer prospect of beings, and many advantages over others. *Διπλὴν ὁρῶσιν οἱ μαθηταὶ γραμμάτια*, when as *ἄπειρα γραμμάτων ἔβλεπον βλέπων*, they have eyes and see not: I, but *these* see, and yet very darkly. What need I tell you how invincible doubts blemish their brightest notions? how the Naturalists head is non-plust with an occult qualitie, and he knows not how to take it off: how the choicest Moralists are pos'd with the riddle of *Summum bonum*, and cannot tell how to extricate themselves. Look up higher to Metaphysicks, which some style *fimbria Theologia*: I, but you may touch the hemme of its garment long enough before you find any vertue coming from it. Converse but with the Schoolmens Works, and there you shall meet with *anigmata in folio*, voluminous riddles. Tis their grand employment to tie a knot, and then see if they can undo it; to frame anemie, and then triumph over him; to make an objection, and then answer it if they can: there are speculations enough, but if you see through them, it will be very darkly.

But if you could see very clearly in all these, yet how weak and insufficient are they to acquaint you with the *Arcana* of Religion, & the great mysteries of Godlinesse?

1. Some such as have been most eminent in them, and as he speaks, have had wits of elevation situated as  
upon

upon a cliffe, but how little have they seen of heaven and heavenly things ! Aristotle with the rest of the heathen, what uncertain and fluctuating notions had they of a Deitie? we are beholden to their dying speeches for most of their Divinity.

2. Many under the light of the Gospel, and furnisht with helps of humane learning, how strangely unacquainted are they with the knowledge of Christ crucified! A plain experienced Christian (notwithstanding all their auxiliary forces) onely by the help of a Bible, will put an whole army of them to flight: *Surgunt indocti & rapiunt cælum*, when they in the mean time do but, as he speaks, *ornare Diabolum*; they become learned spoyles, *Sapienter descendunt in infernum*, they go cunningly to hell. And yet me thinks none should be so silly and malicious as to put the fault in learning, whereas there is no greater vicinitie then between truth and goodnesse; and heaven is full of knowledge, as it is of holinesse: and it is brimfull of both.

3. Sciences themselves are weak and imperfect things, and therefore *ἡ γνῶσις καὶ ἀσθενὴς καὶ ὀλίγη*, as our Apostle tells us, Knowledge shall be abolished, and Tongues which are *vehicula scientiarum*, they shall passe away. So then in this Glasse we see but darkly.

Thirdly, in the Glasse of the *Scriptures*, *in speculo verbi*. This is a pure and spotlesse glasse, representing the will of God unto us, an eternall glasse that shall never be broken, more durable then heaven it self: David was looking in this glasse day and night.

There are many false flattering glasses in the world: I, but here the soul may see its face in a most exact resemblance: it will shew the least spot and deformity, the sinfulness

fulnesse of an idle word, of a vain thought, of a first motion though without consent, the least tendencies to sinne, the first bubblings up of corruption. It deals so plainly as many are offended with it, and swell the more against it: and thus *sinne takes occasion by the commandment*, as *Rom. 7*. Fond Lais breaks her looking-glasse, because it shews the wrinkles in her face: and gives the reason, *Me cernere talem qualis sum nolo, qualis eram nequeo*. Well, the Law that's a glasse to shew us our spots, but it cannot wipe them off: I, but the Gospel is a pure well of salvation, there one may see them and wash them too.

In that Evangelicall mirrour you may see the face of a Saviour, coming in an amiable way with smiles of love, with offers of grace and saving mercie. Nay, the Gospel is called *the face of Jesus Christ*, *2. Cor. 4. 6.* *πρόσωπον Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*. As suppose a glasse when a man had once lookt into it, should keep a permanent and unvanishing species of his face, though he himself afterwards were absent; we might well say, There was the face of such a man: the Gospel is such a glasse, Christ hath lookt into it, and shed his image upon it, and ever since it hath given most glorious representations of him: it is *ἀπαύρασμα τῆς δόξης, καὶ χάριτος ὡς αὐτοῦ*; that I may borrow that expression in the Hebrews: so that when we shall come to see him *πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ὡς ἔστιν ὡς ἔστιν* in heaven, we shall be able to say, Surely this is the very Saviour that was described to me in the Gospel; ---*sic ille manus, sic ora ferebat*. And till we come to heaven it self, we cannot meet with more full manifestations of God and Christ, and all the mysteries of salvation, then in the word of God; and yet here we see but darkly.

For if we consider them under the old Testament,  
how

how long was there comfort lockt up in that *Anigma*, that primitive promise, which was *Aurora Evangelii* the first dawning of the Gospel, *The seed of the woman shall break the serpents head*; and when truth began to shew it self in some fuller discoveries, yet still it was mixt with much obscurity.

They had a twofold glasse. 1. *Speculum ceremoniarum*.  
2. *Speculum prophetiarum*.

1. In the glasse of the Ceremonies they saw very darkly. We could not look for much light where there were so many shadows; where there were so many vails they could not see face to face. That the Jews worshiped a cloud for their God, was a meer calumny: but that they worshiped their God in a cloud we will easily grant, for *all our fathers were under the cloud*, 1. Cor. 10. 1. the Ceremoniall law was nothing else but an heap and miscellany of riddles: who amongst them could tell the meaning of them? nay it is well if we that have the type and antitype meeting together can give a just explanation of some of them. Well, this glasse is now broken: for Ceremonies like false looking-glasses represent the object with too much shadow: and yet still the scarlet whore will be dressing her self by them, because like flattering glasses they make her seem fairer and more beautifull. *Majorésque cadunt altis de montibus umbra.*

2. *In speculo prophetiarum*. *Prophetia est speculum in quo videntur futura*. Here they might see the presence of a desired deliverance, they might see the face of a promised Messias. Buxtorf, in his *Synagoga Judaica*, tells us that he is perswaded this is one main reason why the Jews are so ignorant of the Messias, because they are so little vers't in the Prophets: they spend their whole time upon the Law,



but will not cast an eye upon them: he speaks of the modern Jews. God in much mercy hath given them glasses, and they will not vouchsafe to look in them: they were alwayes an obdurate and stiff-necked people, rebelling against the Prophets, and they go on to fill up the sinnes of their fathers. Well, but yet the Seers themselves saw but *en air*, and they saw in them very darkly.

For 1. Prophecies (as the learned Verulam) have *gradus & scalas complementi*, climbing accomplishments, springing and germinant accomplishments. A prophesie in the bud is not so easily seen as when it shoots out further and spreads it self in larger growth: such passages in Esay as seem to us cleare as the day, were to them dark and Enigmaticall: and we see how obscure Saint Johns prophesie seems to us. And the Devil, who was alwaies Gods Ape, he over-imitated here; for his oracles were wrapt up in so many clouds, and withall so full of fallacies, as none ever could tell their meaning till event had given the interpretation. The Prince of Darknesse would make all his sayings wear his livery: Divine prophecies are as cleare as crySTALL, if compared with his cloudy oracles.

2. Prophecies at best are but weak and imperfect things, and therefore they also shall be abolished, no need of them in heaven: they were very beneficiall to the Church militant, to acquaint her with approaching judgements, and prepare her for intended mercies; but when happinesse is present and compleat, no need of them then, in the Church triumphant.

Thus you have seen how they under the Law saw but darkly: and if Gods peculiar people had so little knowledge of him, in what grosse and palpable ignorance did they



they live that had none of this his light shining upon them, for in *Judah was God known, and his name was famous in Israel. He hath not dealt so with every nation, neither had the heathen knowledge of his law.*

And now if we look upon our selves that live under the light of the Gospel, even we in this sun-shinne see but darkly.

1. There are many *Evangelicall riddles*, a God incarnate, a crucified Saviour: which are such, 1. as the Angels themselves see but darkly, and therefore they are still prying to see more. 2. Reason that great patron of unbelief wrangles against them; and yet reason it self will dictate thus much, That the mysteries of religion should be above the reach of reason. 3. The greatest part of the world reject them: the Greeks esteem them foolishnesse: they think there is not so much in them as in a riddle; in that there is some hidden sense, but these are plain foolishnesse in their esteem; and *Evangelium* to the Jews is no more then *גילוי און*, for so they blasphemously call it, *volumen iniquitatis*. They stumble at a crucified Saviour, and yet themselves were the crucifiers of him. The vail of the temple rent at his death; I, but the vail is still upon their hearts, and yet that e're long shall be rent too: and they shall see him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn, and be in much bitterness, and confesse *ὁ ἔρωσ ἐμὸς ἐσταύρωται*, *We crucified our love, we crucified our Saviour.*

2. There are many *Practicall truths* which are meer riddles to carnall spirits; as to forsake all for a persecuted Christ, to cut off right hands, pluck out right eyes, pray for enemies, not to do evil that good may come thereof; these principles they can hardly digest; and there are many

ny Christian priviledges which they know not what to make of, Assurance of Gods favour, Communion with him, hidden Mannah, Joy in the Holy Ghost glorious and unspeakable. These and such like puzzle their apprehensions; for they never entered into the heart of a naturall man to conceive, it is too narrow for them to enter.

3. There are many *passages* which to Christians themselves are dark and enigmaticall, such as we cannot easily understand. The book of the Revelation is all vail'd with obscurity, the first thing we meet with almost are seven seals: it is full of hidden secrets, and who is there that can unseal the book? Our adversaries the Papists catch at this, and are ready with a double inference: The Scriptures are enigmaticall; therefore cleare them with Traditions, therefore keep them from the people.

But 1. When we speak of the Scriptures darknesse, it is but comparatively in respect of those bright manifestations we shall have of God hereafter. A pearl may be cleare and orient, and yet dark in respect of a starre: a starre may be bright, and yet obscure if compared with the sunne.

2. All truths belonging to the essence of a Christian are plain and perspicuous: and there is an assisting spirit, which though they perhaps may scoff at, and some others may unjustly pretend too, yet without doubt it shall lead Gods people into all truth.

3. Is their Cabala so pure? are their traditions so cleare and crystalline, as that we shall see in them better then in the word? if you cannot see in a pellucid stream, do you think to see in a muddy standing pool?

But Secondly, The Scriptures are enigmaticall, therefore

fore keep them from the people. Nay rather, therefore explain them to them : therefore set up a faithfull ministry, whose *lips may preserve knowledge*, and acquaint them with the mysteries of salvation, and open to them these hidden oracles. And let the people themselves *search the Scriptures, dig for knowledge as for silver, and for wisdom as hid treasure*. Again, they had better see in a glasse, though but darkly, then not to see at all : truth in a cloud, in a riddle is more amiable then a black and palpable ignorance. 3. They keep the Scriptures from them, not because they see in them so darkly, but lest they should see in them too clearly; and above all they lock up the Revelation, not as it is obscure, but because it threatens the seven hills so much. And thus we have look't upon the third particular, the glasse of the *Scriptures*.

Fourthly, *In speculo Providentiæ*. Here Gods glorious attributes shine forth, his wisdom, justice, goodness, and the rest of that glorious constellation. And Providence sets before us examples, they are glasses in which we may see either the beauty of holiness, or else sinnes deformitie. And it is no small felicity of this latter age that we have the use of these glasses, the benefit of so many former examples; and yet we see in them but darkly, they are *a cloud of witnesses*, as it is Hebr. 12. 1. though in another sense. Providence is very mysterious, and there is no readier way to Atheisme then to question it when we cannot give a sufficient account of it. The Indians have a custome, once a yeare to cast a golden bushel into the sea: and thus they think they set a measure and bound to its proud waves, so as it shall not invade their land. Their custome is ri-

diculous enough, and yet they are farre more vain that go about *Deum suo modulo metiri*, to circumscribe an Immenſe being with the narrow compaſſe of their reaſon. Audacious men, that go about to ſet providence a platform, which if it ſhall tranſgreſſe, it preſently paſſes the bounds of juſtice.

Saint Paul that could have dived as deep as another and brought up many pretious pearly obſervations with him, yet dares not venture in, but ſtanding aloof off upon the ſhore, admires the vaſt and boundleſſe ocean, and as one amazed, and almoſt ſwallowed up with the very conſideration of it he cries out, *ὦ βάθος ὁ the depth of the riches both of the wiſdome and knowledge of God! How unſearchable are his judgements, and his wayes paſt finding out!* *ἀνεξετάστοι*, his wayes are in the deep; there is no *ἵχνος* of them, not the leaſt print or *vestigium*, no tracing of a Deity. That God from all eternity ſhould ſmile on Jacob, and frown on Eſau, and that before they had done either good or evil: that the one ſhould become *כִּלְיָ תַקְדֵּר* *was deſiderii* *אוֹרֹת* *is nullo*, and the other *כִּלְיָ רָא חֶסֶד* *אוֹרֹת* *is amicus* that God ſhould break open the heart of a rebellious ſinner by his efficacious grace, and deny ſufficient aid to one that hath improved his preſent ſtrength farre better; that he ſhould ſhine out onely upon ſome few ſpots of ground with the light of the Goſpel, and ſhut up the reſt in palpable darkneſſe; that he ſhould ſuffer his deareſt children to be wronged and inſulted o're, when wickedneſſe in the mean while triumphs ſecurely: theſe and many ſuch like are *anigmata providentia*, we ſee in this glaſſe darkly.

Fiſthly, *In ſpeculo fidei*. Here we ſee *δι' ὁμιλίαν*, for faith

faith is a sure perspective-glasse, by which Abrahams aged eye saw Christs day though asfarre off; and the rest of the Saints πορρῶθεν ἰδόντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας, they saw them at a distance, and yet embraced them: a glasse by which Moses saw him that was invisible. It is *speculum coloratum*, and do's *imbuere objectum colore suo*: it can see a mercy in a judgement, and deliverance in a captivity, help in an exigency: and promises they are faiths glasses, and they speak as the looking-glasse in the Greek Epigram, ἢν μὲ ἐπίδῃς καὶ ἐγὼ σε, *if you look on me I look upon you*; if you apply me, I belong unto you.

And yet we see here but darkly: for faith it self (not to speak of those many doubtings and waverings, those rollings and inquietations of spirit that accompany it: for many cannot reach to assurance, few attain to a plerophorie,) is opposed to vision, 2.Cor. 5. 7. διὰ τῆς πίστεως θεωροῦμεν, καὶ οὐ διὰ ὁράσεως: *we walk by faith and not by sight, & non per aspectum*. Faith as it lives in the mount, (for *in the mount will the Lord be seen*) so it dies in the mount too like Moses, it never enters into the land of promise; for it had its Canaan here, *a land flowing with milk and honey*.

Sixthly, *In speculo Sacramentorum*. Such great and transcendent mysteries as the apprehensions of Angels cannot reach unto, are here presented to the senses.

Baptisme, that's a looking-glasse where the first beam of Gods favourable countenance shews it self, the first expression of his love to a sinfull creature. The laver under the Law was made of looking-glasses; and the laver of regeneration under the Gospel is its self a looking-glasse, where you may see a God in covenant with you, and yet he does not shew himself with a spreading and immediate ray, but onely in a sacramentall reflex: and

Baptisme, though it be styled *caelum*, yet we see in it but darkly, in a riddle much like that of *caelum in tribus ul-*  
*lis*. You may see heaven in this well of salvation. As  
 it was used by way of immersion, there was a riddle of  
 the Resurrection; as by way of sprinkling, there's a riddle  
 of sanctification. You would say, It were no wonder  
 if I should tell you *the infant* sees in it but darkly. I  
 but who is there of *riper yeares* that looks on this glasse,  
 makes any use of it? Who is there almost that spends  
 a thought upon his Baptisme?

And as for the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, why  
 here's a glasse that Christ left with his deare Spouse when  
 he went away from her, in which she may still see his face  
 and be mindfull of him. *Telo uolens eis tui oculi aduersus,*  
*Do this in remembrance of me, and do it to put me in remem-*  
*brance of thee.* for *mutuo tui aduersus* includes both.  
 There is mutuall aspect, and reciprocall glances between  
 Christ and a believing soul in the Sacrament. Christ  
 looks upon the soul with a gracious eye, and the soul looks  
 upon him with an eye of faith. And here are *anigma*  
*enigmata* like that of Samsons, *Out of the strong comes*  
*sweetness.*

And thus we have shewn you the severall glasses  
 through which we see our deities. There remains the  
*oculo recta*, a sight of Gods *pure face*, to know as we are  
 known. But this Hereafter.

READER,

How little we know as we are known should be  
 The *unseen* could not tell; but's gone to see.

FINIS.

